## Comment on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Hemidactylus garnotii* Duméril & Bibron, 1836 (Reptilia, Squamata)

(Case 2960; see BZN **53**: 184–186; **54**: 51–52)

Peter Paul van Dijk

*Zoology Department, University College Galway, Galway, Ireland* and
*The Thai Turtles Laboratory, Biology Department, Science Faculty,*
*Chulalongkorn University, Phya Thai Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand*

I write as a conservation-oriented herpetologist who has had some field encounters in Thailand with the species *Hemidactylus garnotii* Duméril & Bibron, 1836.

It is my pleasure to support the application made by Profs Smith, Kluge, Bauer and Chiszar to conserve the specific name of *Hemidactylus garnotii* in the face of the senior synonymy of *H. peruvianus* Wiegmann, 1835. My reasons for this are two-fold:

1. The name *H. garnotii* is well established and universally employed in publications dealing with the taxonomy of this species and its allies (see, for example, Smith, 1935; Taylor, 1963; Ota & Hikida, 1989; Ota, Hikida & Lue, 1989; Ota, Lau & Bogadek, 1995; Ota, Matsui, Chan-ard & Nabhitabhata, 1996). Few, if any, authors include *H. peruvianus* even as a tentative synonym. I could not find any reference to the latter in my Asia-dominated library.

2. The *Hemidactylus* taxon in question was originally a species of tropical eastern Asia, a region to which its close relatives remain restricted (see papers by Ota et al.). It has subsequently been introduced outside its natural range by human means, its establishment in new locales doubtless facilitated by its parthenogenetic reproduction. For an essentially Asian species to be named '*peruvianus*' may not be nomenclaturally incorrect but it is highly misleading; I hope that it will be kept in mind as an additional factor in favour of the suppression of *peruvianus* on grounds of stability.

### Additional references

**Ota, H. & Hikida, T.** 1989. A new triploid *Hemidactylus* (Gekkonidae: Sauria) from Taiwan, with comments on morphological and karyological variation in the *Hemidactylus garnotii-vietnamensis* complex. *Journal of Herpetology*, **23**(1): 50–60.

**Ota, H., Hikida, T. & Lue, K.-Y.** 1989. Polyclony in a triploid gecko, *Hemidactylus stejnegeri*, from Taiwan, with notes on its bearing on the chromosomal diversity of the *Hemidactylus garnotii-vietnamensis* complex (Sauria: Gekkonidae). *Genetica*, **79**: 183–189.

**Smith, M.A.** 1935. *The fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma. Reptilia and Amphibia*. ix, 440 pp. Taylor & Francis for the India Office, London.

**Taylor, E.H.** 1963. The lizards of Thailand. *The University of Kansas Science Bulletin*, **44**(14): 687–1077.